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Reflection is the path to immortality; thoughtlessness, the path of death. Those who reflect do not die; those who are thoughtless are as if dead already.
—THE DHAMMAPADA.

THEOSOPHY

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THE LIFE OF SOUL

A CONSCIOUS life in Spirit, not matter"—this is the great objective, the transcendent ideal embodied by the Teachers of Theosophy. This is the reality within all forms of Theosophic instruction, the lesson upon which all other truths depend. He who would know the wisdom of the Teachers has first to take the position that made their knowledge possible; to seek within himself that point of spiritual perception around which the life of soul revolves. How shall the disciple learn from his Teacher, except as he comes to see through his Teacher's eyes? And if all the Great Ones found within themselves the secret wisdom, shall the disciple look elsewhere for the Truths they know? There is a place in every heart where all the Teachers live, where souls are *one,* and where the knowledge of all souls is found.

Once the disciple learns this truth, all others follow; knowledge of the Self brings knowledge of the selves, of Law and laws. The first step has been taken, a grand momentum established, and, like the unimpedable growth of a seed after unity with nourishing soil has been established, like the deepening course of a mountain brook as it reaches the plain to become a river, no force in heaven or earth can stay the resolve of the awakened spirit in man.

Such an one is born into the life of soul. He feels a growing faith in the law of his own being—the law of Spirit; the realities he recognizes, unseen by most, are forces rather than forms, moving energies rather than dimensions. Where others see bodies, he sees souls, intelligences, loves and hopes. Obstacles are not barriers for him to hate and curse, but mysteries to solve.

That men may gain the faith to try, the Teachers come. The Teachers cannot raise men to a conscious life in Spirit—to the life of soul that only triving wins. But they mirror in their own lives their own sure wisdom, and seeing this, men feel the faith that they, too, can attain.

FIGURES OF THE TRANSITION AGE

Over the gateway of Century I. of our era, the ominous words "the KARMA OF ISRAEL," fatally glowed. Over the portals of our own, the future seer may discern other words, that will point to the Karma for cunningly made-up HISTORY, for events purposely perverted, and for great characters slandered by posterity, mangled out of recognition, between the two cars of Jagannâtha—Bigotry and Materialism; one accepting too much, the other denying all . . . the "authorities" of the future in the matter of Universal History—are preparing for the History of past nations the fate of certain edifices in tropical countries: "History will tumble down and break into atoms in the lap of the twentieth century, devoured to its foundations by her annalists," said Michelet. . . . Historical facts will remain as concealed from view by the inextricable jungles of modern hypotheses, denials and scepticism. But very happily *actual* History repeats herself, for she proceeds, like everything else, in cycles; and dead facts and events deliberately drowned in the sea of modern scepticism will ascend once more and reappear on the surface. . . .

—H. P. BLAVATSKY, *The Secret Doctrine,* 1888.

There is no disguising the fact that the present world-situation is imperative in forcing men to question searchingly the validity of their own activities. Are, then, those of us engaged in the study of History doing all that lies in our power to make our inquiries to the well-being of our fellow men?

—FREDERICK J. TEGGART, *The Processes of History,* 1918.

WHEN will the "dead facts and events" now drowned in the sea of scepticism reappear and be accepted? Is there any hope that, within a few score years, historians may look upon the unrolling panorama of the past as the gradual fulfillment of a great and intelligent plan of evolution? Is it conceivable that there may exist, say, in the early years of the twenty-first century, universities that will teach a Theosophical explanation of the events of history?

These questions have an answer in *The Secret Doctrine* itself, for at the close of the second volume H. P. Blavatsky predicts a day when the western world will admit the claim of Asiatic nations to a "Secret science" and an "esoteric history of the world," adding that then her great work would "become but the pioneer of many more such books." As to the time of this union between archaic Eastern doctrines and western thought, she wrote in the Introductory to Vol. I: "These teachings will be derided and rejected *a priori* in this century [the nineteenth]; but only in this one. For in the

twentieth century of our era scholars will begin to recognize that the Secret Doctrine has neither been invented nor exaggerated, but, on the contrary, simply outlined; and finally, that its teachings antedate the Vedas." (I, xxxvii-viii.)

It is now over fifty years since this prophecy was recorded, and while a third of a century more has yet to elapse before the end of the hundred-year cycle of the Theosophical Movement, still, there should be, and are, already apparent, certain indications, movements and changes in modern thought, which can be seen, studied, and recognized as part of the great transition toward the synthesis of 1975.

In the writing of history, as in all other phases of human inquiry, we are witnessing the rapid decline of nineteenth century orthodoxy. The conventional historians of H. P. B.'s time thought only of "the facts." They were determined to be "scientific" and naïvely believed that, given enough facts, they could weave them into a narrative that would "simply show how it really happened," as the famous German historian, von Ranke, expressed his ideal. Taking Newton's boast, "I make no hypotheses," as the limiting principle of method in historical research, students wrote long, many-volumed accounts of countries and periods, adding more and more details as they were unearthed, but with little or no idea of the appropriate organization of all these facts. Finally, a point was reached where the works of professional historians were virtually unreadable by the average man. As a modern writer has observed: "History seemed, by about 1900, to have gained scope and accuracy at the expense of its audience, to have become almost as much a mystery to the man in the street as the natural sciences it aped, and a much less impressive mystery." [1]

Reform in the writing of history came from a combination of causes. There was, first, the realization by socially minded scholars that history, to be of value to modern man, must be more than an aggregate of facts. Facts take on meaning only when arranged in some comprehensible pattern; history is not simply a "story"—it should be primarily concerned with the causal relations between historical events and have as its ideal the formulation of general laws. This means the evaluation of some facts as more important than others—the selection of some events or circumstances as historical causes, the classification of others as effects. It was realized, in short, that history cannot be written without a *theory* of history.

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[1] Crane Brinton, "The New History and Past 'Everything'," *American Scholar*, Spring, 1939.

But what about Newton's prohibition of "hypotheses"? Here the specialists in the history of science came to the rescue of the profession as a whole. They showed that Newton's discoveries were the result of not merely one "hypothesis," but several, despite his claim to make none. In order to see in the "facts" of the falling apple and the revolution of the moon about the earth the law named "gravitation," Newton had to regard these occurrences with certain well-defined principles in mind. As Morris Cohen has pointed out, formulation of the law of gravitation would have been impossible without prior knowledge of:

> (1) Galileo's law of falling bodies and Kepler's laws of planetary motion.
>
> (2) The analysis of circular motion into centrifugal and centripetal components—according to the principles of the parallelogram.
>
> (3) The daring and unorthodox speculative idea (which Newton derived from Boehme and Kepler) of a parallelism between the celestial and terrestrial realm.

Dr. Cohen continues, showing that the principles on which Newton's theory was founded were likewise dependent upon earlier conceptions of the nature of things:

> Similarly we know that it was the Pythagorean conception of the book of nature as written in simple mathematical terms that led Galileo to look for and ultimately see the simple law connecting the increased velocity of a falling body with the time of the fall. Tycho Brahe's astronomic tables did not in themselves show Kepler's laws; indeed, they suggested quite different laws to Brahe himself. Kepler could see these laws only after he brought to his vision certain speculative ideas of Apollonius (on conic sections) and of Plotinus. To be sure all these cases (as well as Darwin's discovery of natural selection) show a most painstaking checking up of preconceived ideas by accurately determined or measured facts. But without the well-reasoned ideas, the inquiries could not have been initiated, for there would have been nothing to verify. (*Reason and Nature,* pp. 76-7.)

Here were facts discovered by historians of science which liberated history in general from blind induction; scientific method now permitted and enjoined historians to have a plan! Crane Brinton, of Harvard, rejoices: "Science we regard, not as the discovery of an absolute, determined order inherent in facts but as the arrangement of facts by a process in which the mind of the scientist plays a part as 'creative' and ultimately unanalyzable as the artist's!"

Of course, this change in attitude toward the requirements of scientific method in historiography did not come about in so neatly syllogistic a manner as the foregoing analysis might seem to sug-

gest. It was rather the result, at an intellectual level, of a vast psychic alteration in the race mind, partly intuitive, partly rational, and partly precipitated by the pressing demands of social circumstances introduced by the industrial revolution.

Actually, the whole concept of method in the social sciences, including history, is undergoing the painful and confusing process of redefinition. Today there is no generally accepted view of what history "means," and little agreement as to what plan should be followed in organizing the facts. In contrast with the eager optimism of the nineteenth century, the modern historian displays a humility bespeaking full appreciation of the great mysteries ignored by his predecessors. In the words of the late H. A. L. Fisher, one of the most eminent of English historians:

> Men wiser and more learned than I have discerned in history a plot, a rhythm, a predetermined pattern. These harmonies are concealed from me. I can see only one emergency following upon another as wave follows upon wave, only one great fact with respect to which, since it is unique, there can be no generalizations, only one safe rule for the historian: that he should recognize in the development of human destinies the play of the contingent and the unforeseen. (*The History of Europe,* Preface, 1934.)

Others, while still looking for some sort of pattern in historical events, have made similar confession. Charles A. Beard, a leading American historian, admitted a few years ago: "I confess to have hoped in my youth to find 'the causes of things,' but I never thought that I had found them. . . . As I said in 1913, 'It may be that some larger world process is working through each series of historical events; but ultimate causes lie beyond our horizon'." (*An Economic Interpretation of the Constitution,* 1935, p. xiii.) Philip Ainsworth Means, authority on pre-columbian America, acknowledges an indefinable factor in historical processes, which, he says, "may be designated frankly as *x,* the unknown quantity, apparently psychological in kind." He adds:

> If *x* be not the most conspicuous factor in the matter, it is certainly the most important, the most fate-laden. When, through a tardily completed understanding of the significance of life, we achieve mastery over *x,* then, and not until then, shall we cease to be a race of biped ants and, consummating our age-old desire, join the immortal gods. (*Ancient Civilizations of the Andes,* 1931, p. 26.)

If historians had always maintained this honest position regarding the limitations of their method, the world might not have been deluded into thinking that Science, "socially applied," would soon solve all our problems! For scientists themselves, the realization

that mere induction is no magic key to the secrets of the universe has been a chastening experience, leading to wiser formulations of their hopes and objectives. But for the world, which has learned from bitter experience how ill-founded were the utopian promises of nineteenth century science, the revelation of scientific fallibility has energized a great surge of anti-rationalism. Scientists have lost the confidence of the masses, and it may be many years before modern civilization can achieve another unity of faith and ideal. Ortega y Gasset, Spanish patriot and essayist, discusses this phase of the transition age in his latest book, *Toward a Philosophy of History:*

> When, . . . we compare the situation in which the European found himself about the year 1910 with that of today, the perception of the change, the mutation, that has occurred ought to cause in us a salutary terror. A mere twenty years, that is to say only a portion of a man's life, in itself so short, have sufficed to invert the order of things to the point that, whereas then one might in any part of Europe have invoked faith in science and the rights of science as the maximum human value, and this urge functioned automatically, the social body accepting in all docility its imperative and reacting thereto with efficacy, energy and promptitude, today there are already nations where such an invocation would provoke only smiles—nations that some years ago were considered precisely as being in the van of science—and I do not believe there is any, at the time of writing, in which it would call forth even a throb from the social body (p. 177).

The reason for this loss of faith is very simple. As Ortega says, "The upshot is that, where great human changes are concerned, science, strictly so called, has got nothing exact to say."

Thus history, as a branch of science and a uniform body of theory, has at last broken into atoms "in the lap of the twentieth century," as Michelet predicted. But meanwhile, during the process of disintegration, a number of individual theories have arisen. When an orthodoxy dies, heterodoxies begin to flourish, and new doctrines, many of them originating outside the pale of the "academies," are now claiming the attention of modern thought. The conception of cyclic destiny, so long sneered at as an antique superstition, has been daringly revived by Oswald Spengler, and made the scheme of his famous book, *The Decline of the West.* Spengler is frankly Hegelian in his philosophy of history. "In the Destiny idea," he says, "the *soul* reveals its world-longing, its desire to rise into the light, to accomplish and actualize its vocation." Every historic culture, Spengler holds, has an organismic character and passes as a whole through four phases of organic destiny: Youth, Maturity, Decline and Death.

Western civilization, he believes, is in its period of declination. While Spengler's development of this thesis is somewhat Nietzschean in tone, and although he is guilty of serious distortions—he says of the Catholic confessional: "Perhaps no institution in any religion has brought so much happiness into the world as this"—*The Decline of the West* has nevertheless opened up many fertile possibilities for future investigation. The impact of this book has been enormously fruitful in liberating the educated public from conventional views of how history "ought" to be written. If Spengler is free to theorize and win supporters, why not other men?—thinkers in whom moral resolve is the governing motive?

The keynote for future histories of this character has already been sounded by Dr. Hutchins:

> Since history should assist us to understand the nature and activities of men, it cannot be studied as a mass of details united only by temporal or geographic considerations. It must itself be informed by an understanding of man, of society and of the moral basis on which society rests.
>
> All the problems of America today are moral problems. It is easy to see that the problem of distribution, of which we hear so much, is nothing but the problem of justice in modern dress. The historian, and *a fortiori,* the economic historian, who attempts to understand distribution without understanding justice is merely a reporter or annalist or antiquarian. He is not an historian. The historian who would make the past intelligible, the historian who would make it useful in the solution of the great problems of our day, the historian who would rise above detail to see the purposes of human life and of organized society must be a moralist.

Examination of the tendencies in recent historical writing which give promise of developing in this direction must be deferred until the next of these studies.

Impersonal God

What should I answer to these friendly youths who ask of me an account of Theism and think the views I have expressed of the impersonality of God desolating and ghastly? I say, that I cannot find, when I explore my own consciousness, any truth in saying that God is a person, but the reverse. I feel that there is some profanation in saying, "He is personal." To represent him as an individual is to shut him out of my consciousness.

—Ralph Waldo Emerson.

"A HIGHER POWER THAN MAN'S"

FOR centuries men have explained their adherence to the Christian religion by saying that it gives expression to the feeling that "a higher power than man's" is working in the processes of nature. Christianity has often been accepted as the only available witness on the religious scene in the West, the only explanation of this "higher power" and its relation to humanity. The conviction of an individual bond between man and a higher order of intelligence is so fundamental a part of universal tradition that it is often called the "religious instinct."

This feeling, this attempt to reach out to "something beyond," which has characterized the people of every age, must contain or hide the secret of some ultimate truth. The fact that the God of the Christians has been materialized to a point out of all relation to a reasoned explanation of life is evidence of perversion rather than hallucination—a perversion inevitable during a "dark period in the history of mankind." To examine this intuition of a "higher power" in the light of Theosophical philosophy is a far-reaching and important task, for it offers hope of understanding both the ignorance and the sincerity of religious people of every creed and sect.

Man, at his present stage of evolutionary development, is indeed pitifully unable to solve unaided the mysteries of life and death. Through genius in the arts and inspiration in poetry, through noble deeds and self-sacrifice, he feels at times his divine heritage, but usually this perception is soon overtaken by a sense of futility in the face of human weaknesses. More rarely, when humans resolve to live as Gods, they grow into true men. Once, Krishna, Buddha and Jesus had to *become* beings of "great sacrifice," Gods in their own right, in order that the latent sparks of divinity in others might be awakened through understanding of the great evolutionary purpose of life.

A Lincoln who rose above political self-seeking to a life of service cannot be denied his place in these ranks, nor any who lived to give rather than to receive. The Gods who walked the earth" in ancient legends find their counterparts throughout modern history, seldom recognized, often belittled, but nonetheless living witnesses to the divine potentiality in man. The prophets of true religion, that great brotherhood whose bond of union is knowledge, are always present in the world of tears and sorrows. There is indeed a higher power than that of any single human, the concerted power of all

those who have in some degree reached beyond the delusion and ignorance that blind the eyes of the majority. Always help is there, help through knowledge which each can make his own, and through the heeding of wise counsel from the Elder Brothers who stand ready to help those willing to help themselves for the benefit of others.

This view of nature and life is wholly natural, wholly under law. Must there not be an infinite gradation of beings above man as well as below? Only the spiritually sterile religions of a dark age urge men to seek vicarious help from a God whose motives are as personal as their own. The God of the Christians is indeed but an extension of the child's dependence on his parent before he is ready to assume his own responsibility. There is "a power higher" than that of man as we know him, but it is not the power that brings the personal fulfillment of desires. It will never procure for him an unearned personal heaven, but it *can* sustain the efforts of the humblest who strive to fan the flame of their own divinity.

This power is the spiritual will, and it is intensified by the one-mindedness of all the "Gods" who understand their mission to humanity. With aroused will and mind, each man can feel within himself the currents of high resolve generated by these Brothers of the race, and he can share, if only for intervals at first, their life of pure ideas and undarkened perception. Intuitions of this mystical relation between men and Gods have always existed, and only the desires of the personality have shrouded the truth, bringing perverted conceptions of avenging and rewarding angels, of a God that must be implored and propitiated. "Impacted in the imperishable center of man's nature" is this knowledge, the memory of the "Sons of God" through whom "infant humanity got its first arts and sciences, as well as of spiritual knowledge." "It is they," wrote H. P. B., "who have laid the first foundation stone of those ancient civilizations that puzzle so sorely our modern generation of students and scholars." She herself was one of their number, for she made it her constant task to arouse and purify in men the memory of a relation beclouded by personalized theologies. Her message gave hope that men might see reality in the tales of Gods that walked the earth; might feel in themselves courage and promise for the whole of humanity, that in the long ascent to knowledge, no human soul is ever refused lawful and natural help by those who have gone before.

IS THEOSOPHY A RELIGION?

By H. P. BLAVATSKY

[In H. P. B.'s time, as today, the chief obstacle to intelligent appraisal of the Theosophical philosophy was the widespread impression that Theosophy is some kind of new religion, with no real claim upon the attention of those whose minds have reached that pitch of *critical* development which makes acceptance of any dogmatic religion impossible. Religionists become such by their will to believe, their willingness to stultify inward demands for justice and philosophical consistency in order that they *may* believe. Theosophists, in contrast with believers, are those who will *to know;* as a body, they are defined by their common *purposes* and *ideals,* not common *beliefs,* which are barriers to further progress in inquiry. This vast and fundamental difference between Theosophy and Religions is the subject of the present article by H. P. B., which first appeared in *Lucifer* for November, 1888.—Editors, THEOSOPHY.]

"Religion is the best armour that man can have,
but it is the worst cloak." —BUNYAN.

IT is no exaggeration to say that there never was—during the present century, at any rate—a movement, social or religious, so terribly, nay, so absurdly misunderstood, or more blundered about than THEOSOPHY—whether regarded theoretically as a code of ethics, or practically, in its objective expression, *i.e.,* the Society known by that name.

Year after year, and day after day had our officers and members to interrupt people speaking of the theosophical movement by putting in more or less emphatic protests against theosophy being referred to as a "religion," and the Theosophical Society as a kind of church or religious body. Still worse, it is as often spoken of as a "new sect"! Is it a stubborn prejudice, an error, or both? The latter, most likely. The most narrow-minded and even notoriously unfair people are still in need of a plausible pretext, of a peg on which to hang their little uncharitable remarks and innocently-uttered slanders. And what peg is more solid for that purpose, more convenient than an "ism" or a "sect." The great majority would be very sorry to be disabused and finally forced to accept the fact that theosophy is neither. The name suits them, and they pretend to be unaware of its falseness. But there are others, also, many more or less friendly people, who labour sincerely under the same delusion. To these, we say: Surely the world has been hitherto sufficiently cursed with the intellectual extinguishers known as dogmatic creeds, without having inflicted upon it a new form of faith! Too many already wear their faith, truly, as Shakespeare puts it, "but as the

fashion of his hat," ever changing "with the next block." Moreover, the very *raison d'être* of the Theosophical Society was, from its beginning, to utter a loud protest and lead an open warfare against dogma or any belief based upon blind faith.

It may sound odd and paradoxical, but it is true to say that, hitherto, the most apt workers in practical theosophy, its most devoted members were those recruited from the ranks of agnostics and even of materialists. No genuine, no sincere searcher after truth can ever be found among the *blind* believers in the "Divine Word," let the latter be claimed to come from Allâh, Brahmâ or Jehovah, or their respective Kurân, Purâna and Bible. For:

Faith is not *reason's* labour, but repose.

He who believes his own religion on faith, will regard that of every other man as a lie, and hate it on that same faith. Moreover, unless it fetters reason and entirely blinds our perceptions of anything outside our own particular faith, the latter is no faith at all, but a temporary belief, the delusion we labour under, at some particular time of life. Moreover, "faith without principles is but a flattering phrase for willful positiveness or fanatical bodily sensations," in Coleridge's clever definition.

What, then, is Theosophy, and how may it be defined in its latest presentation in this closing portion of the XIXth century?

Theosophy, we say, is not *a* Religion.

Yet there are, as everyone knows, certain beliefs, philosophical, religious and scientific, which have become so closely associated in recent years with the word "Theosophy" that they have come to be taken by the general public for theosophy itself. Moreover, we shall be told these beliefs have been put forward, explained and defended by those very Founders who have declared that Theosophy is *not* a Religion. What is then the explanation of this *apparent* contradiction? How can a certain body of beliefs and teachings, an elaborate doctrine, in fact, be labelled "Theosophy" and be tacitly accepted as "Theosophical" by nine-tenths of the members of the T. S., if Theosophy is not a Religion?—we are asked.

To explain this is the purpose of the present protest.

It is perhaps necessary, first of all, to say, that the assertion that "Theosophy is not *a* Religion," by no means excludes the fact that "Theosophy *is* Religion" itself. A Religion in the true and only correct sense, is a bond uniting men together—not a particular set of dogmas and beliefs. Now Religion, *per se,* in its widest meaning is that which binds not only *all* MEN, but also *all* BEINGS and all *things* in the entire Universe into one grand whole. This is our theosophical

definition of religion; but the same definition changes again with every creed and country, and no two Christians even regard it alike. We find this in more than one eminent author. Thus Carlyle defined the Protestant Religion in his day, with a remarkable prophetic eye to this ever-growing feeling in our present day, as:

> For the most part a wise, prudential feeling, grounded on mere calculation; a matter, as all others now are, of expediency and utility; whereby some smaller *quantum* of earthly enjoyment may be exchanged for a far larger *quantum* of celestial enjoyment. Thus religion, too, is profit, a working for wages; not reverence, but vulgar hope or fear.

In her turn Mrs. Stowe, whether consciously or otherwise, seemed to have had Roman Catholicism rather than Protestantism in her mind, when saying of her heroine that:

> Religion she looked upon in the light of a ticket (with the correct number of indulgences bought and paid for), which, being once purchased and snugly laid away in a pocket-book, is to be produced at the celestial gate, and thus secure admission to heaven. . . .

But to Theosophists (the genuine Theosophists are here meant) who accept no mediation by proxy, no salvation through innocent blood shed, nor would they think of "working for wages" in the *One Universal* religion, the only definition they could subscribe to and accept in full is one given by Miller. How truly and theosophically he describes it, by showing that

> . . . true Religion
> Is always mild, propitious and humble;
> Plays not *the tyrant,* plants *no faith in blood,*
> Nor bears destruction on her chariot wheels;
> But stoops to polish, succour and redress,
> And *builds her grandeur on the public good.*

The above is a correct definition of what true theosophy *is,* or ought to be. (Among the creeds Buddhism alone is such a true heart-binding and men-binding philosophy, because it is not a dogmatic religion.) In this respect, as it is the duty and task of every genuine theosophist to accept and carry out these principles, Theosophy *is* RELIGION, and the Society its one Universal Church; the temple of Solomon's wisdom,* in building which "there was neither

*Whose 700 wives and 300 concubines, by the bye, are merely the personations of man's attributes, feelings, passions and his various occult powers: the Kabalistic numbers 7 and 3 showing it plainly. Solomon himself, moreover, being, simply, the emblem of SOL—the "Solar Initiate" or the Christ-Sun, is a variant of the Indian "Vikarttana" (the Sun) shorn of his beams by Viswakarma, his Hierophant-Initiator, who thus shears the *Chrestos*-candidate for initiation of his golden radiance and crowns him with a dark, blackened auréole—the "crown of thorns." (See the "Secret Doctrine" for full explanation.) Solomon was never a living man. As described in *Kings,* his life and works are an allegory on the trials and glory of Initiation.

hammer, nor axe, *nor* any tool of iron heard in the house while it was building" (I. Kings, vi.); for this "temple" is made by no human hand, nor built in any locality on earth—but, verily, is raised only in the inner sanctuary of man's heart wherein reigns alone the awakened soul.

Thus Theosophy is not *a* Religion, we say, but RELIGION itself, the one bond of unity, which is so universal and all-embracing that no man, as no speck—from gods and mortals down to animals, the blade of grass and atom—can be outside of its light. Therefore, any organization or body of that name must necessarily be a UNIVERSAL BROTHERHOOD.

Were it otherwise, Theosophy would be but a word added to hundreds other such words as high sounding as they are pretentious and empty. Viewed as a philosophy, Theosophy in its practical work is the alembic of the Mediæval alchemist. It transmutes the apparently base metal of every ritualistic and dogmatic creed (Christianity included) into the gold of fact and truth, and thus truly produces a universal panacea for the ills of mankind. This is why, when applying for admission into the Theosophical Society, no one is asked what religion he belongs to, nor what his deistic views may be. These views are his own personal property and have nought to do with the Society. Because Theosophy can be practiced by Christian or Heathen, Jew or Gentile, by Agnostic or Materialist, or even an Atheist, provided that none of these is a bigoted fanatic, who refuses to recognize as his brother any man or woman outside his own special creed or belief. Count Leo N. Tolstoy does not believe in the Bible, the Church, or the divinity of Christ; and yet no Christian surpasses him in the practical bearing out of the principles alleged to have been preached on the Mount. And these principles are those of Theosophy; not because they were uttered by the Christian Christ, but because they are universal ethics, and were preached by Buddha and Confucius, Krishna, and all the great Sages, thousands of years before the Sermon on the Mount was written. Hence, once that we live up to such theosophy, it becomes a universal *panacea* indeed, for it heals the wounds inflicted by the gross asperities of the Church "isms" on the sensitive soul of every naturally religious man. How many of these, forcibly thrust out by the reactive impulse of disappointment from the narrow area of blind belief into the ranks of arid disbelief, have been brought back to hopeful aspiration by simply joining our Brotherhood—yea, imperfect as it is.

If, as an offset to this, we are reminded that several prominent members have left the Society disappointed in theosophy as they

had been in other associations, this cannot dismay us in the least. For with a very, *very few* exceptions, in the early stage of the T. S.'s activities when some left because they did not find mysticism practiced in the General Body as *they* understood it, or because "the leaders lacked Spirituality," were "untheosophical, hence, untrue to the rules," you see, the majority left because most of them were either half-hearted or too self-opinionated—a church and infallible dogma in themselves. Some broke away, again under very shallow pretexts indeed, such, for instance, as "because Christianity (to say Churchianity, or *sham* Christianity, would be more just) was too roughly handled in our magazines"—just as if other fanatical religions were ever treated any better or upheld! Thus, all those who left have done well to leave, and have never been regretted.

Furthermore, there is this also to be added: the number of those who left can hardly be compared with the number of those who found everything they had hoped for in Theosophy. Its doctrines, if seriously studied, call forth, by stimulating one's reasoning powers and awakening the *inner* in the animal man, every hitherto dormant power for good in us, and also the perception of the true and the real, as opposed to the false and the unreal. Tearing off with no uncertain hand the thick veil of dead-letter with which every old religious scriptures were cloaked, scientific Theosophy, learned in the cunning symbolism of the ages, reveals to the scoffer at old wisdom the origin of the world's faiths and sciences. It opens new vistas beyond the old horizons of crystallized, motionless and despotic faiths; and turning blind belief into a reasoned knowledge founded on mathematical laws—the only *exact* science—it demonstrates to him under profounder and more philosophical aspects the existence of that which, repelled by the grossness of its dead-letter form, he had long since abandoned as a nursery tale. It gives a clear and well-defined object, an ideal to live for, to every sincere man or woman belonging to whatever station in Society and of whatever culture and degree of intellect. Practical Theosophy is not *one* Science, but embraces every science in life, moral and physical. It may, in short, be justly regarded as the universal "coach," a tutor of world-wide knowledge and experience, and of an erudition which not only assists and guides his pupils toward a successful examination for every scientific or moral service in earthly life, but fits them for *the lives* to come, if those pupils will only study the universe and its mysteries *within themselves,* instead of studying them through the spectacles of orthodox science and religions.

And let no reader misunderstand these statements. It is Theosophy *per se,* not any individual member of the Society or even Theoso-

phist, on whose behalf such a universal omniscience is claimed. The two—Theosophy and the Theosophical Society—as a vessel and the *olla podrida* it contains, must not be confounded. One is, as an ideal, *divine* Wisdom, perfection itself; the other a poor, imperfect thing, trying to run *under,* if not *within,* its shadow on Earth. No man is perfect; why, then, should any member of the T. S. be expected to be a paragon of every human virtue? And why should the whole organization be criticized and blamed for the faults, whether real or imaginary, of some of its "Fellows," or even its Leaders? Never was the Society, as a concrete body, free from blame or sin—*errare humanum est*—nor were any of its members. Hence, it is rather those members—most of whom will not be led by theosophy, that ought to be blamed. Theosophy is the soul of its Society; the latter the gross and imperfect body of the former. Hence, those modern Solomons who *will* sit in the Judgment Seat and talk of that they know nothing about, are invited before they slander theosophy or any theosophists to first get acquainted with both, instead of ignorantly calling one a "farrago of insane beliefs" and the other a "sect of impostors and lunatics."

Regardless of this, Theosophy is spoken of by friends and foes as a religion when not a *sect.* Let us see how the special beliefs which have become associated with the word have come to stand in that position, and how it is that they have so good a right to it that none of the leaders of the Society have ever thought of disavowing their doctrines.

We have said that we believed in the absolute unity of nature. Unity implies the possibility for a unit on one plane, to come into contact with another unit on or from another plane. We believe in it.

The just published "Secret Doctrine" will show what were the ideas of all antiquity with regard to the *primeval instructors* of primitive man and his three earlier races. The genesis of that WISDOM-RELIGION, in which all theosophists believe, dates from that period. So-called "Occultism," or rather Esoteric Science, has to be traced in its origin to those Beings who, led by Karma, have incarnated in our humanity, and thus struck the key-note of that secret Science which countless generations of subsequent adepts have expanded since then in every age, while they checked its doctrines by personal observation and experience. The bulk of this knowledge—which no man is able to possess in its fullness—constitutes that which we now call Theosophy or "divine knowledge." Beings from other and higher worlds may have it entire; we can have it only approximately.

Thus, unity of everything in the universe implies and justifies our belief in the existence of a knowledge at once scientific, philosophical and religious, showing the necessity and actuality of the connection of man and all things in the universe with each other; which knowledge, therefore, becomes essentially RELIGION, and must be called in its integrity and universality by the distinctive name of WISDOM-RELIGION.

It is from this WISDOM-RELIGION that all the various individual "Religions" (erroneously so called) have sprung, forming in their turn offshoots and branches, and also all the minor creeds, based upon and always originated through some personal experience in psychology. Every such religion, or religious offshoot, be it considered orthodox or heretical, wise or foolish, started originally as a clear and unadulterated stream from the Mother-Source. The fact that each became in time polluted with purely human speculations and even inventions, due to interested motives, does not prevent any from having been pure in its early beginnings. There are those creeds —we shall not call them religions—which have now been overlaid with the human element out of all recognition; others just showing signs of early decay; not one that escaped the hand of time. But each and all are of divine, because natural and true origin; aye—Mazdeism, Brahmanism, Buddhism as much as Christianity. It is the dogmas and human element in the latter which led directly to modern Spiritualism.

Of course, there will be an outcry from both sides, if we say that modern Spiritualism *per se,* cleansed of the unhealthy speculations which were based on the dicta of two little girls and their very unreliable "Spirits"—is, nevertheless, far more true and philosophical than any church dogma. *Carnalised* Spiritualism is now reaping its Karma. Its primitive *innovators,* the said "two little girls" from Rochester, the Mecca of modern Spiritualism, have grown up and turned into old women since the first raps produced by them have opened wide ajar the gates between this and the other world. It is on their "innocent" testimony that the elaborate scheme of a sidereal Summer-land, with its active astral population of "Spirits," ever on the wing between their "Silent Land" and our very loud-mouthed, gossiping earth—has been started and worked out. And now the two female Mahommeds of Modern Spiritualism have turned self-apostates and play false to the "philosophy" they have created, and have gone over to the enemy. They expose and denounce *practical* Spiritualism as the humbug of the ages. Spiritualists—(save a handful of fair exceptions)—have rejoiced and sided

with *our* enemies and slanderers, when these, *who had never been Theosophists,* played us false and showed the cloven foot denouncing the Founders of the Theosophical Society as frauds and impostors. Shall the Theosophists laugh in their turn now that the original "revealers" of Spiritualism have become its "revilers"? Never! for the phenomena of Spiritualism are facts, and the treachery of the "Fox girls" only makes us feel new pity for all mediums, and confirms, before the whole world, our constant declaration that no medium can be relied upon. No true theosophist will ever laugh, or far less rejoice, at the discomfiture even of an opponent. The reason for it is simple:—

Because we know that beings from other, higher worlds do confabulate with some elect mortals now as ever; though *now* far more rarely than in the days of old, as mankind becomes with every civilized generation worse in every respect.

Theosophy—owing, in truth, to the *levée in arms* of all the Spiritualists of Europe and America at the first words uttered against the idea that every communicating *intelligence* is necessarily the Spirit of some ex-mortal from this earth—has not said its last word about Spiritualism and "Spirits." It may one day. Meanwhile, an humble servant of theosophy, the Editor, declares once more her belief in Beings, grander, wiser, nobler than any *personal* God, who are beyond any "Spirits of the dead," Saints, or winged Angels, who, nevertheless, *do* condescend in all and every age to occasionally overshadow rare sensitives—often entirely unconnected with Church, Spiritualism or even Theosophy. And believing in high and holy Spiritual Beings, she must also believe in the existence of their opposites—lower "spirits," good, bad and indifferent. Therefore does she believe in spiritualism and its phenomena, some of which are so repugnant to her.

This, as a casual remark and a digression, just to show that Theosophy includes Spiritualism—as it should be, not as it is—among its sciences, based on knowledge and the experience of countless ages. There is not a religion worthy of the name which has been started otherwise than in consequence of such *visits* from Beings on the higher planes.

Thus were born all prehistoric, as well as all the historic religions, Mazdeism and Brahmanism, Buddhism and Christianity, Judaism, Gnosticism and Mahomedanism; in short every more or less successful "ism." All are true at the bottom, and all are false on their surface. The Revealer, the artist who impressed a portion of the Truth on the brain of the Seer, was in every instance a true artist,

who gave out genuine truths; but the instrument proved also, in every instance, to be *only a man.* Invite Rubenstein and ask him to play a sonata of Beethoven on a piano left to *self-tuning,* one-half of the keys of which are in chronic paralysis, while the wires hang loose; then see whether, the genius of the artist notwithstanding, you will be able to recognize the sonata. The moral of the *fabula* is that a man—let him be the greatest of mediums or natural Seers—is but a man; and man left to his own devices and speculations *must* be out of tune with absolute truth, while even picking up some of its crumbs. For Man is but a *fallen* Angel, a god within, but having an animal brain in his head, more subject to cold and wine fumes while in company with other men on Earth, than to the faultless reception of divine revelations.

Hence the multi-coloured dogmas of the churches. Hence also the thousand and one "philosophies" so-called, (some contradictory, theosophical theories included); and the variegated "Sciences" and schemes, Spiritual, Mental, Christian and Secular; Sectarianism and bigotry, and especially the personal vanity and self-opinionatedness of almost every "Innovator" since the mediaeval ages. These have all darkened and hidden the very existence of TRUTH—the common root of all. Will our critics imagine that we exclude theosophical teachings from this nomenclature? Not at all. And though the esoteric doctrines which our Society has been and is expounding, are not *mental* or *spiritual* impressions from some "unknown, *from above,*" but the fruit of teachings given to us by living men, still, except that which was dictated and written out by those Masters of Wisdom themselves, these doctrines may be in many cases as incomplete and faulty as any of our foes would desire it. The "Secret Doctrine"—a work which gives out all that can be given out during this century, is an attempt to lay bare *in part* the common foundation and inheritance of all—great and small religious and philosophical schemes. It was found indispensable to tear away all this mass of concreted misconceptions and prejudice which now hides the parent trunk of (*a*) all the great world-religions; (*b*) of the smaller sects; and (*c*) of Theosophy as it stands now—however veiled the great Truth, by ourselves and our limited knowedge. The crust of error is thick, laid on by whatever hand; and because we *personally* have tried to remove some of it, the effort became the standing reproach against all theosophical writers and even the Society. Few among our friends and readers have failed to characterize our attempt to expose error in the *Theosophist* and *Lucifer* as "very uncharitable attacks on Christianity," "untheosophical assaults," etc.,

etc. Yet these are necessary, nay, indispensable, if we wish to plough up at least *approximate* truths. We have to lay things bare, and are ready to suffer for it—as usual. It is vain to promise to *give* truth, and then leave it mingled with error out of mere faint-heartedness. That the result of such policy could only muddy the stream of facts is shown plainly. After twelve years of incessant labour and struggle with enemies from the four quarters of the globe, notwithstanding our four theosophical monthly journals—the *Theosophist, Path, Lucifer,* and the French *Lotus*—our wish-washy, tame protests in them, our timid declarations, our "masterly policy of inactivity," and playing at hide-and-seek in the shadow of dreary metaphysics, have only led to Theosophy being seriously regarded as a religious SECT. For the hundredth time we are told—"What good is Theosophy doing?" and "See what good the Churches are doing"!

Nevertheless, it is an averred fact that mankind is not a whit better in morality, and in some respects ten times worse now, than it ever was in the days of Paganism. Moreover, for the last half century, from that period when Free thought and Science got the best of the Churches—Christianity is yearly losing far more adherents among the cultured classes than it gains proselytes in the lower *strata,* the scum of Heathendom. On the other hand, Theosophy has brought back from Materialism and blank despair to belief (based on logic and evidence) in man's *divine* Self, and the immortality of the latter, more than one of those whom the Church has lost through dogma, exaction of faith and tyranny. And, if it is proven that Theosophy saves one man only in a thousand of those the Church has lost, is not the former a far higher factor for good than all the missionaries put together?

Theosophy, as repeatedly declared in print and *viva voce* by its members and officers, proceeds on diametrically opposite lines to those which are trodden by the Church; and Theosophy rejects the methods of Science, since her inductive methods can only lead to crass materialism. Yet, *de facto,* Theosophy claims to be both "RELIGION" and "SCIENCE," for theosophy is the essence of both. It is for the sake and love of the two divine abstractions—*i.e.,* theosophical religion and science, that its Society has become the volunteer *scavenger* of both orthodox religion and modern science; as also the relentless Nemesis of those who have degraded the two noble truths to their own ends and purposes, and then divorced each violently from the other, though the two are and *must be one.* To prove this is also one of our objects in the present paper.

The modern Materialist insists on an impassable chasm between the two, pointing out that the "Conflict between Religion and Science" has ended in the triumph of the latter and the defeat of the first. The modern Theosophist refuses to see, on the contrary, any such chasm at all. If it is claimed by both Church and Science that each of them pursues the truth and *nothing but the truth,* then either one of them is mistaken, and accepts falsehood for truth, or both. Any other impediment to their reconciliation must be set down as purely *fictitious*. Truth is one, even if sought for or pursued at two different ends. Therefore, Theosophy claims to reconcile the two foes. It premises by saying that the *true* spiritual and primitive Christian religion is, as much as the other great and still older philosophies that preceded it—*the light of Truth*—"the life and the light of men."

But so is the *true* light of Science. Therefore, darkened as the former is now by dogmas examined through glasses smoked with the superstitions artificially produced by the Churches, this light can hardly penetrate and meet its sister ray in a science, equally as cobwebbed by paradoxes and the materialistic sophistries of the age. The teachings of the two are incompatible, and cannot agree so long as both Religious philosophy and the Science of physical and external (in philosophy, *false*) nature, insist upon the infallibility of their respective "will-o'-the-wisps." The two lights, having their beams of equal length in the matter of false deductions, can but extinguish each other and produce still worse darkness. Yet, they can be reconciled on the condition that both shall clean their houses, one from the human dross of the ages, the other from the hideous excrescence of modern materialism and atheism. And as both decline, the most meritorious and best thing to do is precisely what Theosophy alone can and *will* do: *i.e.,* point out to the innocents caught by the glue of the two waylayers—verily two dragons of old, one devouring the intellects, the other the souls of men—that their supposed chasm is but an optical delusion; that, far from being one, it is but an immense garbage mound respectively erected by the two foes, as a fortification against mutual attacks.

Thus, if theosophy does no more than point out and seriously draw the attention of the world to the fact that the *supposed* disagreement between religion and science is conditioned, on the one hand by the intelligent materialists rightly kicking against absurd human dogmas, and on the other by blind fanatics and interested churchmen who, instead of defending the souls of mankind, fight simply tooth and nail for their personal bread and butter and

authority—why, even then, theosophy will prove itself the saviour of mankind.

And now we have shown, it is hoped, what real Theosophy is, and what are its adherents. One is divine Science and a code of Ethics so sublime that no theosophist is capable of doing it justice; the others weak but sincere men. Why, then, should Theosophy ever be judged by the personal shortcomings of any leader or member of our 150 branches? One may work for it to the best of his ability, yet never raise himself to the height of his call and aspiration. This is his or her misfortune, never the fault of Theosophy, or even of the body at large. Its Founders claim no other merit than that of having set the first theosophical wheel rolling. If judged at all they must be judged by the work they have done, not by what friends may think or enemies say of them. There is no room for *personalities* in a work like ours; and all must be ready, as the Founders are, if needs be, for the car of Jaggennâth to crush them *individually* for *the good of all.* It is only in the days of the dim Future, when death will have laid his cold hand on the luckless Founders and stopped thereby their activity, that their respective merits and demerits, their good and bad acts and deeds, and their theosophical work will have to be weighed on the Balance of Posterity. Then only, after the two scales with their contrasted loads have been brought to an equipoise, and the character of the net result left over has become evident to all in its full and intrinsic value, then only shall the nature of the verdict passed be determined with anything like justice. At present, except in India, those results are too scattered over the face of the earth, too much limited to a handful of individuals to be easily judged. Now, these results can hardly be perceived, much less heard of amid the din and clamour made by our teeming enemies, and their ready imitators—the indifferent. Yet however small, if once proved good, even now every man who has at heart the moral progress of humanity, owes his thankfulness to Theosophy for those results. And as Theosophy was revived and brought before the world, *viâ* its unworthy servants, the "Founders," if their work was useful, it alone must be their vindicator, regardless of the present state of their balance in the petty cash accounts of Karma, wherein social "respectabilities" are entered up.

SCIENCE AND THE SECRET DOCTRINE

BIOMORPHOS

II

> The astral body is the guiding model for the physical one, and all the other kingdoms have the same astral model. Vegetables, minerals, and animals have the ethereal double, and this theory is the only one which will answer the question how it is that the seed produces its own kind and all sentient beings bring forth their like.
>
> —*The Ocean of Theosophy.*

OLD age sets in when the vivifying currents of the astral form slacken, weaken, and become clogged. This, in turn, is brought about by the loosing of the "will to live," and this, again, by the secret consciousness of the Ego that the game is nearly played out and soon will no longer be worth the candle.

A part of this problem involves the nature of Prana, "vital breath," or as sometimes called, "vitality." During the nineteenth century the idea of a specific vital force was contemptuously received; all biological phenomena were supposed to be merely special manifestations of ordinary atomic and molecular forces. Prof. Richardson was an exception to the general view. Quoting and commenting upon his ideas, H. P. Blavatsky said:

> ". . . It [his "nervous ether"] holds the nervous system throughout in perfect tension, during states of life (*true*). By exercise it is disposed of (*rather generated*) . . . and when demand for it is greater than the supply, its deficiency is indicated by nervous collapse or exhaustion." [Note by H. P. B.: "And too great an exhuberance of it in the nervous system leads as often to disease and death. If it were the *animal system which generated it,* such would not be the case."] It accumulates in the nervous centres during sleep, bringing them, if I may so speak, to their due tone, and therewith raising the muscles to awakening and renewed life." . . .
>
> Modern Science denies the existence of a "vital principle." This extract is a clear proof of its grand mistake. But this "physical something," that we call life-fluid—the *Liquor Vitae* of Paracelsus—has not *deserted the body,* as Dr. Richardson thinks. It has only changed its state from activity to passivity, and become latent owing to the too morbid state of the tissues, on which it has no more hold. Once the *rigor mortis* absolute, the *"Liquor Vitae"* will re-awaken into action, and begin its work on the atoms *chemically*. . . .
>
> Lastly he writes . . . "The nervous Ether may be poisoned; it may, I mean, have diffused through it, by simple gaseous diffusion, other gases or vapours derived from without; it may derive from

> within products of substances swallowed and ingested, or gases of decomposition produced during disease in the body itself." (*The Secret Doctrine* I, 538.)

A progressive poisoning of the whole system is suspected by modern science to have much to do with senescence, disease and death. The above remarks give the clue to the real nature of that poisoning. It is scientifically suspected that the tissues in themselves are free from inhibitory factors existent in the body—as in fact Dr. Carrel's famous immortal chicken tissue proved. Dr. Ephraim Shorr, Cornell Medical College, has pointed out that the metabolism of excised tissues of a dog is superior to that of the whole animal.[1]

What, then, is the origin and nature of this mysterious force? Madame Blavatsky wrote all that could be told about it; one of her most significant passages runs as follows:

> This "Nervous Ether" is the lowest principle of the Primordial Essence which is *Life*. It is *animal vitality* diffused in all nature and acting according to the conditions it finds for its activity. It is not an "animal product," but the living animal, the living flower or plant are *its* products. The animal tissues only absorb it according to their more or less morbid or healthy state—as do *physical* materials and structures *(in their primogenial state—nota bene)*—and henceforward, from the moment of the birth of the Entity, are regulated, strengthened, and *fed* by it. It descends in a larger supply to vegetation in the *Sushumna* sun-ray which lights and feeds the moon, and it is through her beams that it pours its light upon, and penetrates man and animal, more during their sleep and rest, than when they are in full activity. (*S. D.* I, 537.)

(One of the channels of the astral body is called "sushumna," and is the means of ingress of this force in the human form.)

These forces are of the nature of light, or rather of its *invisible principles*. Very evidently the invisible ultra-violet partakes of their nature. Something of a mystery exists in the fact that though the living cell uses visible light, only the ultra-violet provides the kind of energy needed to carry out some of the cell's vital processes.[2] But enough has been learned of the importance of the ultra-violet in biological activity to make it the basis of innumerable medical treatments, methods of processing food and medicines, etc. Dr. George Crile has remarked that eating food is actually eating ultra-violet and infra-red rays which have been absorbed by it from the sun. Nitrogen atoms from the air, which enter the body in breathing, have been charged with electricity from the atmosphere, and this

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[1] *Science*, May 7, 1937.

[2] Prof. Farrington Daniels, *Science*, May 31, 1935.

energy becomes the activating force of the living tissue.[3] (Atmospheric electricity is generated by the sun, and thus Dr. Crile is stating the proposition almost as the Theosophical doctrines have it!)

However, ultra-violet is by no means the only vibration with which prana is associated. Different colors of light produce widely varying effects in plants, not only different rates of growth but surprising effects of other kinds. Seedlings exposed to blue light tend to bend toward the light and toward one another; red light produces the opposite effect. Plants receiving orange light become greener than the others, and those receiving only blue-green light develop a marked yellowish coloration. Roots grow longest in extreme blue, and shortest in orange-red.[4]

An experiment conclusively demonstrating the actual substantiality of vital solar energy was performed by Dr. E. A. Spessard,[5] who sealed green plants in airtight glass containers where no plant food could be obtained. These plants gained weight during ten months. Glass, it may be noted, cuts off most of the ultra-violet rays.

The astral body is also the basis of *physical* individuality. An extended discussion of the efforts of modern biology toward understanding the character of this kind of individuality—which of course is the only kind recognized by science—is provided by Dr. Leo Loeb.[6] This important article should be studied directly if possible, as only a resumé is possible here.

Dr. Loeb first mentions the well-known methods of recognizing an individual, then adds two which are more significant from the viewpoint under consideration. They are the body scent, by which an animal can distinguish any individual from any other, and the fingerprint pattern. The scent is explained Theosophically as the outcome of the individual relation between the pranic currents and the physical chemistry of the body; the fingerprint is a direct result of the astral pattern of the individual.

Dr. Loeb observes that there are bases of individuality which do not rest in specific tissues alone. He speaks of the "mosaic" or unified design presented by the totality of the organs and tissues. But beyond this there are properties common to all of the organs and tissues, which distinguish the man from others:

> There is inherent in every higher individual organism something which differentiates him from every other individual, which can be discovered by observing the reactions of certain cells and tissues belonging to one individual towards the tissues and cells of another

[3] Press, April 20, 1934.
[4] *Science*, July 17, 1936.
[5] Associated Press, Jan. 3, 1936.
[6] *Science*, July 2, 1937.

> individual of the same species. They act as if there was something in common to all parts of one organism which differs from the analogous characteristics of all the parts in a different organism of the same species. And not only do these cells recognize the different individuals as such, they do more than that, they recognize, to speak in a metaphorical way, the degree of difference between two individuals as based on their genetic constitution.

Dr. Loeb goes into much detail about the transplantation and serological experiments which show the mutual affinity between the tissues of one individual and their common antagonism to the tissues of other individuals. His essential conclusion is:

> The organism is then a harmonious whole, in which not only the organ functions are adapted to one another, but in which also all the various tissues, which apparently are not functionally related, are specifically adapted to one another, owing to the nature of their organismal differentials. This latter adaptation above all is what characterizes the individual. Such a harmonious relationship must be based on resemblances or identities in certain chemical structures of the most important and complex substances which enter into the building of the organism, especially substances of a protein nature.

And of course, so far as Dr. Loeb is concerned, the differences are purely chemical. But Biology will doubtless be a long time in proving specific chemical differences, because of the very complexity of the organic molecules involved, which often defy analysis. Even if differences should be discerned so that they can be represented by chemical formulas, the insoluble problem will remain: How did these differences arise? and how are they maintained?

While modern biologists are progressively justifying Madame Blavatsky's prediction that "Chemistry and physiology are the two great magicians of the future, who are destined to open the eyes of mankind to the great *physical* truths" (*S. D.* I, 261), the blank wall which separates the merely physical from the realm of *psycho*-biology has already been reached. This impasse in scientific progress was also indicated by H. P. B. in *The Secret Doctrine:*

> Science is welcome to speculate upon the physiological mechanism of living beings, and to continue her fruitless efforts in trying to resolve our feelings, our sensations, mental and spiritual, into functions of their inorganic vehicles. Nevertheless, all that will ever be accomplished in this direction has already been done, and Science will go no farther. She is before a dead wall, on the face of which she traces, as she imagines, great physiological and psychic discoveries, but every one of which will be shown later on to be no better than the cobwebs spun by her scientific fancies and illusions. (I, 133.)

No doubt immense complexities in the purely physical nature of man will still be unravelled by Science; but to the percipient mind, every such step leaves in profounder darkness the real mystery of the psychic and mental powers. The latter rest on the basis of a *true* individuality. The nature of these powers cannot be disclosed by either the chemical analyses of the scientist or the visions of the psychic. To reach into the unfathomable substratum of Being, the seat of Real individuality, requires perceptive powers not available to either scientist or psychic. And it is well to remember that whatever may be the course of science during coming decades, it is certain that the sun of psychism is barely below the morning horizon of this century. Many are those among both scientists and laymen who will be badly scorched by its brilliant but toxic rays.

STATES AFTER DEATH

Question: In view of the condition of Astral Man stated by W. C. T. in FORUM No. 9, Question 32, what was the effect of our civil war on the astral plane, and reflexively on ourselves?

W. Q. J.—To answer this Question aright would require the powers of an Adept who could see into the astral light and measure the exact results. But sudden deaths in war are not the same in effect as the killing of a murderer or a wicked man who has violated the law. The men destroyed in battle are engaged in the moving of troops, the arrangement of batteries, firing of volleys, and using the sword. Their attention is almost wholly thus occupied, and when they are suddenly killed it is with this idea of present attack and defense fixed in their nature. If we suppose them as lingering in the astral plane, then they will there continue the same actions which occupied them at the time of death. But the criminal, who has lead a crimnial life, who is full of evil passions, and who steps off into the other world with a heart full of passion and revenge, will linger on the other plane full of those unsatisfied desires, and not overmastered, as is the warrior, by a single strong idea. The astral warrior confines himself to the repetition of attack and defense, while the criminal seeks to satisfy his revenge and bad instincts in general. These considerations seem to me to point out a difference. I do not pretend to answer the whole question, however, as to the effect of war acting from other planes.—*Forum,* September, 1890.

PRACTICE AND REALIZATION

WITH what depth of understanding do we lend ear to the admonition to exemplify Theosophy in daily life, if we would ever hope to achieve realization—direct, first-hand perception of the truth of philosophy. Intuitively men perceive that to accept a philosophy, but not to practice it, is one of the despicable and hypocritical traits of present "human" nature. Yet seldom is it realized that this very tendency shuts the door to higher knowledge.

To affirm that an individual fails to live by ideas he accepts is to utter a half-truth. Every action performed by any man is based on concepts he holds. The trouble with the man whose actions appear counter to his professed beliefs is that he harbors simultaneously two opposing sets of ideas. One, the true, he intellectually acknowledges and openly professes; the other, the false, he secretly acquiesces to from desire, afraid to part with them lest in their eradication the personality suffer too painfully. The energies of consciousness, not being focused through the lens of fundamental principles, are diffused in conflicting departments of his nature, nullifying benefits derived from contact with a right philosophy of life, and pushing away the possibility of self-realization.

All too willing to permit himself the indulgence and the laziness of the race-mind, he allows himself also to forget the consequences of failure to do according to his best perception. Save he informs his mind by study of right philosophy; save he studies the world's needs; save he practices the virtues that others may not be misled by his example, he may know he loses steadily in this human warfare, and when his account is closed, he may find his life was lived in vain: he has forgotten the mission of his incarnation.

The man, however, who even in small ways endeavors to exemplify concretely the ideas he holds to be true, and extirpates the false, to that degree overcomes the conflict and confusion within, gradually opening a channel whereby the knowledge and experience of the higher Ego can penetrate the lower brain-mind. Then his light becomes a light to other men. His mind stimulates and energizes theirs. A new strength sustains him as he uses it for others. So, doing what he sees and knows, he realizes that Self is One, and spells it—Brotherhood.

YOUTH-COMPANIONS' FORUM

IF *light and darkness are the world's eternal ways, are we not removing the means of evolution by destroying the cause of sin, sorrow and suffering?*

(*a*) Sin, sorrow and suffering and their causes are not and were not part of the natural scheme of things, but have resulted from man's selfish actions. We consider them evil but they are not of themselves the evil referred to in the verse that says "light and darkness are the world's eternal ways." According to *The Secret Doctrine:*

> The ancients considered that when the directing active "Intelligences" (the gods) retired from any portion of Ether *in our Space* . . . then that particular place was left in the possession of evil, so called by reason of the absence of the *Good* from it. (I, 343.)
>
> Chaos-Theos-Kosmos, the triple deity, is *all in all.* Therefore, it is said to be male and female, good and evil, positive and negative: the whole series of contrasted qualities. (I, 347.)
>
> Dragons and other fallen angels being described in other parts of this work, a few words upon the much-slandered Satan will be sufficient. That which the student will do well to remember is that, with every people except the Christian nations, the Devil is to this day no worse an entity than the opposite aspect in the dual nature of the so-called Creator. This is only natural. One cannot claim God as the synthesis of the whole Universe, as Omnipresent and Omniscient and Infinite, and then divorce him from evil. As there is far more evil than good in the world, it follows on logical grounds that either God must include evil, or stand as the direct cause of it, or else surrender his claims to absoluteness. The ancients understood this so well that their philosophers—now followed by the Kabalists—defined evil as the lining of God or Good: *Demon est Deus inversus,* being a very old adage. Indeed, evil is but an antagonizing blind force in nature; it is *reaction, opposition,* and *contrast,*—evil for some, good for others. There is no *malum in se:* only the shadow of light, without which light could have no existence, even in our perceptions. If evil disappeared, good would disappear along with it from Earth. The "Old Dragon" was pure spirit before he became matter, *passive* before he became *active.* . . . Everywhere the speculations of the Kabalists treat of Evil as a FORCE, which is antagonistic, but at the same time essential, to GOOD, as giving it vitality and existence, which it could never have otherwise. . . . Plants would perish in eternal sunlight, and so would man, who would become an automaton without the exercise of his free will and aspirations after that sunlight, which would lose its being and value for him had he nothing but light. (I, 413-414.)

In writing of evil, H. P. B. does not at all speak of sin, sorrow, and suffering, but of the fall into matter, the cycle of incarnation on this earth, during which the soul must gain divinity. (See *S. D.* II, 515.) Contrast does not depend upon the sin and sorrow humanity has brought on itself in the past. The effect of the opposites can be experienced without crime, killing, warfare, and hatred; such experiences are wholly unnecessary to learn the lessons life has to offer. It is said that this mankind is far behind in its evolution because of extreme human selfishness. *The Bhagavad-Gita* shows that all the necessary lessons may be learned through unselfish and brotherly actions—by practicing the devotion taught by Krishna.

(*b*) "These two, Light and Darkness, are the world's eternal ways," is an ancient poet's way of saying that manifestation is based on the pairs of opposites. Man is the chooser, and the pairs of opposites present the contrasts between which he chooses. The pairs of opposites are readily recognized in positive and negative, subjective and objective, right and left, up and down. Every stick has two ends and every object has at least two sides. Man has made unnatural pairs of opposites by misapplication or failure to use knowledge. Sin need not be. The seventh race will be a race of adepts, and we cannot imagine that prisons and insane asylums will have a place among them, and yet their range of perception, based on pairs of opposites, will be beyond anything we can conceive. Man has come to believe that sin is an inherent quality. It may be that the greatest contribution Theosophy has to offer in this dark era is the teaching of man's perfectibility, that virtue is positive and has a rational basis.

(*c*) Things are good or evil only with respect to some purpose or desired end. To call pain evil is to assume that pleasure is the end of life. Man's true end, however, is not pleasure, but *knowledge*. It is a mistake, therefore, to regard the sensation of pain as an evil. Pain, like pleasure, is inseparable from manifested life; hence, it is a necessary experience through which knowledge is gained. As *The Secret Doctrine* puts it:

> The whole order of nature evinces a progressive march towards *a higher life*. There is design in the action of the seemingly blindest forces. The whole process of evolution is a proof of this. The immutable laws that weed out the weak and feeble species, to make room for the strong, and which ensure the "survival of the fittest," though so cruel in their immediate action—all are working toward the grand end. (I, 277.)

If the whole universe exists for the sole purpose of bringing about the soul's experience, then "evil" can only be that which interferes

with the growth of the soul. Sorrow and suffering are often strengthening experiences, so that they cannot be regarded as evils in themselves. "Sin," however, is defined in Theosophy as "the performance of some action for the attainment of an object of *worldly,* hence *selfish,* desire, which cannot fail to be hurtful to somebody else." (*S. D.* II, 302 fn.) Sinful acts are *causes,* which lead to the *effects* of sorrow and suffering. If the latter bring the sufferer to see the connection between cause and effect, then they are good because they have helped him to increase his knowledge. And under the law of Karma, suffering *cannot* cease until men stop acting selfishly; that is, until they perfectly realize the absolute unity of all life. When this is accomplished, the present cycle of evolution will have been completed. The real question is, Why do men act selfishly?

There is no simple answer to this question. H. P. Blavatsky has said that the mystery of good and evil belongs to the highest initiation. We have only hints as to the true origin of evil. The *Katha Upanishad* says: "The Self-Being pierced the opening outwards; hence one looks outward, not within himself. A wise man looks towards the Self with reverted sight, seeking deathlessness." According to *The Secret Doctrine:*

> Spiritual evolution being incapable of keeping pace with the physical, once its homogeneity was broken by the admixture, the gift (of free will) thus became the chief cause, if not the sole origin of *Evil.* The philosophical view of Indian metaphysics places the Root of Evil in the differentiation of the Homogeneous into the Heterogeneous, of the unit into plurality. (II, 421.)
>
> Evil is a necessity in, and one of the supporters of the manifested universe. It is a necessity for progress and evolution, as night is necessary for the production of day, and Death for that of Life—*that man may live forever.* (II, 389.)
>
> Woe to those who live without suffering . . . . how can there be any change for the better without proportionate suffering during the preceding stage? Is it not those only who have learnt the deceptive value of earthly hopes and the illusive allurements of external nature who are destined to solve the great problems of life, pain, and death? (II, 475.)

It should be clear that the evolution of the soul is itself the means of destroying the causes of sin, sorrow, and suffering, so that there need be no fear of interfering with evolution through their "removal." And, as Patanjali says:

> Although the Universe in its objective state has ceased to be, in respect to that man who has attained to the perfection of spiritual cultivation, it has not ceased in respect to all others, because it is common to others besides him.

Why has the Universe "ceased to be" for such a Being? *The Secret Doctrine* answers:

> In human nature, evil denotes only the polarity of matter and Spirit, a struggle for life between the two manifested Principles in Space and Time, which principles are one *per se,* inasmuch as they are rooted in the Absolute. In Kosmos, the equilibrium must be preserved. The operations of the two contraries produce harmony, like the centripetal and centrifugal forces, which are necessary to each other—mutually interdependent—"in order that both should live." If one is arrested, the action of the other will become immediately self-destructive. (I, 416.)

Evil, and its train of consequences, arise only when the individual will of man is set against the general will of Nature—the Spiritual law of Life. Embodied in a separate physical form, men suppose that they are divided from their fellows, falling victim to the "Great Heresy." Need we have fallen? We can only ask ourselves, *Need we fall now?*

Should a Theosophist be concerned about having "good manners"? What is said about the hypocrisy of conventional forms and the uselessness of mere ceremonial suggests that too much emphasis on manners might only reflect the decadence of our time.

(*a*) "Good manners" are not something that you put on and take off like a coat. True gentility is the natural reflection of an inner feeling; that is, honest thoughtfulness for others. Courtesy and social polish may be only veneer concealing bad hearts and shallow attitudes, or they may be the true expression of a highly moral and disciplined being like an Emerson, a Washington or a Lincoln. It is interesting that the American Indian has said that the white man is rough and coarse, that he does not know how to get along with others. People of the far East do not think of westerners as having "good manners." When we remember that the West has been a fighting and trading people who built commercial empires by exploitation of the non-industrial peoples of the world, we see how the West lost the true basis for "good manners," or consideration for others. We see why in the West the ancient customs in general became a hollow veneer. A theosophist does not abandon customs of courtesy and good manners; he tries to give them a deeper meaning by using them to express simplicity, unselfishness, sacrifice and true service.

(*b*) One test for good manners may be found in the injunction to "gentle service" as it is used in the ancient Egyptian chant, "Children of Light, as ye go forth into the world, seek to render gentle service to all that live." The disciples who daily set out with this chant in

their hearts were trained men and women, educated and prepared to work strenuously for humanity. They disciplined their powers; they were not boastful, not aggressive, not noisy, but quiet like the power of the oak tree when its slow growth splits the rock. They were strong, wise and kind, because they understood the heart of man.

To examine into the state of our own manners is an enlightening practice. Are we asking for the service of others unnecessarily, or are we finding new and more helpful ways of living with our families, our friends and associates? Why, if ever, are we tempted to lash out at others with cold or cruel words? The theosophist knows that critical, harsh and bitter thoughts belie all external courtesies, all effort to assume the manner of gentility. Mr. Judge was indignant at nothing, surprised at nothing, required nothing of others for himself, blamed no one. He felt no partiality and showed no favoritism. He was cosmopolitan in sympathy and in conduct. His ease of manner and of speech came from true gentility because he was one of those who like the Egyptian neophytes understood the human heart.

If an individual is prevented by circumstances from doing Theosophical work he considers necessary, what course should he follow? Should he wait for Karma to take him out of those conditions?

By performing the duty which we find undesirable, not as a task, but as a possible clue to some hidden mystery, we may regain a measure of that discrimination which we have lost through indifference, laxity, fear and impatience. Work for Theosophy is not something apart from daily duty, nor is the necessity for earning a livelihood a barrier to working for Theosophy. Whatever our work, whatever our circumstances, we still can examine our attitude to see if our effort may be truly called a spiritual effort. What would one of the Great Ones do in our place? Once we see that Theosophy is the very essence of our being; that we can not really work for Theosophy, but that Theosophy works for us; that we can in no sense make a contribution to Theosophy, but that we are benefiting ourselves, enriching ourselves by every Theosophical effort, then will we redouble our efforts in the daily task we have, earn more, do more, give more, work harder. We need to remember that the man who discovers gold does not benefit the gold.

We may be allowing ourselves to relax in circumstances which we hope "Karma" will remove merely because we have a wish to work for Theosophy. Karma is no outside power. We are Karma. Demosthenes became a great orator because he worked to overcome his inability to speak without stammering. By facing what look like disagreeable tasks, with courage, and gladly, one often finds that what looked ahead like a lifetime duty may pass like a gracious dream.

THE LAND OF THE FREE

FREEDOM as a general and abstract term has a ring of boldness and vigor. There is a precious sap to the feeling of it that all men awaken and respond to, entirely apart from any specific freedom which they may contemplate. All men "know" freedom, and they rush to explain and describe it, in terms of some phase of their life, or in terms of its contrary, slavery. But they use illustrations merely to shadow forth what they feel within, while realizing that freedom itself is never contained in any partial experience. Freedom is like space, in which, though the mind may move as far as it will, there is always a beyond.

Because we are men, divine intelligences, we have communion with a realm of impersonal thought; our minds embody ideas larger than ourselves or anything in our lives—ideas such as freedom. We are able to detach ourselves from the anxious worries of where the rent is coming from, how we shall eat and drink, of wherewithal we shall be clothed, and enjoy the pure satisfaction of bare ideas. There is no pleasure so keen for men as this gift of freedom of the mind, the power to roam the world of universal ideas.

The over-intellectuality of the age is rooted in the joy that men have in the manasic principle, by which they survey the world of effects from on high, and play at the game of proving their abstract theories by adding together the facts of the world, re-arranging, dividing, subtracting. But after they have laboriously collected a million facts to prove their point, they become blinded. They say, "It was not I, who had a thought, and then searched out raw facts, and hewed and builded, until, lo! I beheld this temple fashioned in the likeness of the thought. No, indeed. The facts got together quite unaided; they climbed into position, and at last I beheld this GREAT FACT—that the facts made me, not I, them—which is so concrete and solid everyone will have to admit it has nothing to do with anything so airy as an idea or thought."

So men enslave themselves with ideas which had their birth in the "land of the free," the place of pure spirit. The theories of heredity and environment have suffered exactly this fate. From a form of honest inquiry they have turned into shackles of mind. First, someone had a thought, a splendid universal question. "Why is it that man is superior to animals, animals to plants, plants to the 'inanimate' world?" Then came the suggestion, "Why, it is a kind of ladder; perhaps by a slow process each class of form gave birth to a better variation, and those variations which were best adapted to the en-

vironment survived, while weaker creatures were devoured by the stronger." "Why the ladder?" was not asked. But only "How?"

Then came the search for facts to prove this fascinating theory, and as all freaks and variations from species were unexplained, the germ plasm was cross-sectioned, delicately toyed with under the microscope, and it was decided that the variation of an individual was due to some freak arrangement of particles within the chromosome. But why a "chance" arrangement? And how by mere chance could unthinking molecules shape so vast a course of evolution? Why do the lower forms and processes so often survive, after the superior have been evolved from them? Why do they not all in the course of time become transformed into higher stages, or suffer extinction?

Men must bow their heads and worship the GREAT FACTS of physical heredity and environment. These are not thought of as theories. They are concrete and solid facts. The facts arranged themselves. There is no other theory that will fit these facts. All men must admit that their characters result from two factors: the chance arrangement of molecules in the germ of the parents, and the chance influence of environment. If a weak individual was unwittingly and mechanically constructed by the unconscious plasm, then the environment will shape this irresponsible puppet into an unsocial creature, endowed with many disastrous complexes and repressions. If our actions are bad, we cannot be blamed. We are slaves. We have only followed the inevitable commands of heredity and environment. Free will is a myth, a medievalism.

Suppose that instead of the question, "How has man risen from the animals, animals from plants, and plants from the 'inanimate' world?" the equally legitimate questions had been asked, "Why do men have literature, and by means of little scratches on paper, abstract symbols, communicate with each other? How are they able to consider such pure ideas as justice, liberty, happiness, qualities such as courtesy, honor, honesty, altruism, and thoughtfulness?" Would it have been possible to discover the cause of man's abstract thoughts in the differentiations of the germ plasm? Has anyone ever read a thought of any kind in any place in brain or body? The brain and body are visible, the thought is invisible. Dissect a brain or a body as much as we please, we can never find the meanings, the thoughts, the feelings an individual has toward life, in the formation of the tissues. We cannot put a dial and pointer to the left-hand top section of the cerebral cortex, and say, "Look! there he is thinking of his mother; he remembers the errand she asked him to do." Yet people are thinking every second of the day, in a complex

and rapid way, in words, in symbols, in terms of economics and of how to earn their bread, and also in terms of ethics—which sometimes makes the earning of their bread quite difficult. The most civilized and highly evolved members of humanity are those who *will not* aid themselves at the expense of others. How shall we explain the presence in man of conceptions so impersonal that they have nothing to do with the utilitarian concept of *"the survival of the fittest"?* It is this phrase alone which has been offered to explain why better forms evolved from simpler.

What happens when we ask the champions of heredity to explain unselfish thoughts in man—ideas as to soul, responsibility, moral law, immortality? It is stoutly replied by them that there is no unselfishness, no impersonal thought. If a man refrains from brutal acts, it is simply because he fears retaliation, or dislikes the criticism of those who might disapprove. If a man believes in the court and jury system for others, it is not from an understanding of justice, but because he hopes to profit from the system himself at some future date. If a man supposes that he has learned the lessons of life through the inherent power to learn and live, then he is deluded by the antiquated *mores* of a pre-scientific age. The will to learn, to live, to choose, as *souls,* is a metaphysical superstition.

Why does science go to such pains to dogmatize that no man is unselfish? Because the theory of the survival of the fittest has been the hitching post for all the facts of evolution. Rather than take the stand of humility and vouch for the facts of their own subjective experience, our "authorities" presume to tell all others what goes on in the hearts of humanity. Men started their inquiry into the processes of Nature with the query, "Why have we power such as the dumb brutes do not possess?" And now we have come to argue that we are no better than animals, with no motives or incentives other than self-interest and self-preservation. We are trying to deny the most primary facts of personal experience; we are trying desperately to believe that we see no difference between right and wrong, between moral cause and effect, between heroic and cowardly conduct. We refuse to recognize the feeling of release and freedom experienced in the contemplation of great ideals, as contrasted with the stifling that constricts our hearts when we indulge in petty ambition, personal comparisons and rivalries, anxiety for place, position, and security. We have turned our backs on the evolution that lies ahead of us. We have denied our own noblest impulses because they do not fit into the rationale of animal psychology.

Can we not see that all so easy to understand in terms of animal survival lies *behind* us? The fourth grader does not at first under-

stand the new lessons given by the new teacher. Should he then prefer to stay in the third grade where all is plain and simple? That in man which is but dimly perceived, infrequent, and difficult to understand, lies ahead of him—not all these lower impulses whose import and meaning we grasp so easily. Give a man a new field to conquer and discover, and he is a free man. All of his energies are ready to be unleashed. His mind is open. He questions all possibilities, makes all manner of explanations. Instead of the old question, "How did nature evolve man's present form?" let us ask, What is the nature of my will? What kind of actions, thoughts, and feelings, release the powers of thought, will, and feeling, in the fullest? What kind of thought and feeling seems to stretch the mind? What kind brings it dull relapse?

The runner moving down the home-stretch experiences freedom. He is directing all his energy toward a goal; he is combining the restraint of a specific lane with the full release of his powers within the channel. The force of the ocean is felt only by means of the currents, or as its waves dash against the obstruction of the shores. The many vibrations of electricity are able to manifest only through special instruments, such as light globes, radio sets, heaters, dynamos.

The inner meaning of evolution is the creation of channels through which the divine potency may flow. We are creators, we are force. No one else needs to tell us that we are individual *powers,* centers of action. Life, as explained by mechanistic science, is only an effect, a "residue" from the past. Why should we insist upon tasting and re-tasting experience which lies behind us? The effort toward freedom lies in the direction of cutting out new channels for our life-force to act through. We have to act from new bases. We have to forget the old motives and develop our potentialities for impersonal thinking. We have to train ourselves not to react as dogs or tigers, snarling at mistreatment, ruled by natural impulse. We must train ourselves to be ready, as self-conscious beings, to see ourselves impersonally and objectively, no matter what comes to us; ready to act for the right, instead of reacting in the old instinctive patterns. To be creators of a new pattern of thought and action, not creatures of our past; not to wait for a spark to set us off along some train of thought determined by the mixed actions and motives of the world, but to be innovators, builders: this is the way toward human freedom, this our horizon.

ON THE LOOKOUT

"Youth Challenges Education"

Under this title Dorothy Thompson prints in the *Ladies Home Journal* for June a letter addressed by an undergraduate of an Eastern university to the president of that institution. Coming at a time when the youth of the nation have been under fire for their apathy toward the great social issues of the day, and when the entire scheme of modern education has been called into question by scores of critics, this letter is indeed a "challenge," as well as a rebuttal to the accusations directed against the students of America. More forcefully than any adult writer of recent years, its student-author joins the issue between scientific materialism and traditional ideals, asking, in effect, What are we to believe?

Passing of Christianity

The letter begins by comparing the university president's education with that received by the student of today. While the former was led to believe in "the divinity of Christ, eternal principles of right and wrong, the existence of the human soul, a personal God and a life after death," convictions of this sort are not possible to the student who places reliance on what is now being taught in the schools. The president is made to realize that:

> "In the modern college it is probably fair to say that Christianity has progressively lost its grip on young minds. You may have noticed that, unlike you, most of us have scarcely ever glanced at the Bible. When our elders refer to eternal verities, absolutist ethics, we are likely to recall the lesson your instructors in sociology have driven home—that morals are relative to time and place, that what is good in one society is bad in another. Such teaching is separated only by a hair's breadth from the view that there can be no such thing as sin. Have we not gleaned from your very own professors of natural science, philosophy and ancient history that religions are the product of myth and superstition and that men create gods in their own image; that if there is such a thing as the soul, no scientist has ever isolated it in the laboratory?"

Foundations of Democracy

The writer might have indicated that the vital point of difference between science and religion is the dogma of a personal God, whose fiats can by no stretch of the imagination be made compatible with

the concept of natural law. It is the morality founded on the theory of a personal creator that science has destroyed; theological reluctance to forego anthropomorphism *forced* scientific thought to the materialistic extremes which are now held responsible for our moral disorders. But this letter is chiefly a work of criticism, of calling to account, with only the briefest of positive suggestions. Next the writer examines the conflict between the philosophical conceptions underlying the democratic theory of government and the doctrines of modern sociology. The university president is told:

> "During your youth you also were educated to think that man is superior to animals, that he is a free agent capable of choosing between good and evil. Loyalty to country was an ideal you came to cherish, and your schooling never caused you to doubt that man possesses certain inalienable rights. Your position is typical of your generation.
>
> "But what about us, the youth of America? What have we been taught to revere in the university you direct, and in other similar institutions throughout the land? . . ."

Effects of Moral Relativism

> "Turning to political systems, you learned that man is distinct from animals, and yet our biology courses now conceive of man merely as one species of mammal. Furthermore, is not your traditional doctrine of free will at odds with the basic assumption of modern science—determinism? Why, a logical inference from every psychology lecture we have ever attended would be that man's least thought and act can be wholly explained in terms of cause and effect; that every choice is dictated by a billion strings of deterministic factors leading back to the dawn of time.
>
> "Moreover, the concept of progress you accepted must include some criterion of progress. Assuming all such criterions, like morals, are relative, changing with time and place, does not the whole concept become illusory? Finally, from lectures, from assigned reading in H. L. Mencken, Charles Beard, Walter Millis, Aldous Huxley, and the like, we learned that men have always falsely pictured their own particular little tribe or little nation as God's anointed, as a superpeople whose culture ought to be forcibly disseminated to the ends of the earth. Accordingly, we know not whether to praise or curse the current flag waving, and a belief that the American system is much better than any other."

"Alone and Unguided"

When these problems are raised in the classroom, intelligent discussion is difficult because of the general unwillingness to face any question which might arouse the sleeping dogs of religious contro-

versy. Then, too, the hallowed "objectivity" of scientific method tends to ignore the reality of moral issues. "Our instructors the country over," this student observes, "are accustomed to present an aloof and objective interpretation of their material, leaving us alone and unguided to draw our own conclusions and integrate our own philosophies." As "one spokesman for a floundering generation," the writer asks for help in answering some questions—"questions so desperately important to us that the whole course of our lives hangs in the balance." These are some of the questions:

> "What reason is there, in light of present knowledge, for continuing to accept any form of Christianity? If the implications of modern education are what they appear to be, was not Jesus of Nazareth an ordinary human whose naïve outpourings reveal a sad ignorance of politics and economics, whose precepts constitute a fanatical repudiation of human nature as your subordinates have taught us to view it? If it is correct to infer from sociology that sin is nonexistent, why should we cultivate any restraints or tolerate any inhibitions? If the teachings in American halls of learning are valid, will you kindly point out the fallacy in
>
> *"The good old rule . . . the simple plan,*
> *That they should take who have the power*
> *And they should keep who can.*

Can Animals Cherish Ideals?

> "If men are but animals, why not treat them as such? An animal has no rights. The law among animals is the law of the strong. If man is a slave to determinism, incapable of a free choice, what is the value of the ballot, trial by jury and civil liberties in general? If there is no natural law in the universe, how do you justify those inalienable rights which the Declaration of Independence asserts men to possess? If patriotic fervor is just a manifestation of an 'enlarged tribalism,' why do you think America is worth defending?
>
> "Personally, I fail to understand how you, or any other college president, can expect us to become ardent Christians and democrats when the vital postulates on which these faiths are supposed to rest are daily undermined in the classroom.
>
> "One thing seems certain, and I state this with all the solemnity of which I am capable: You and other educators the country over are now rearing a brood of potential fascists! The sacredness of the old ideas is fast being abolished, and no alternative outlook has been proposed."

"The American Tragedy"

It has remained for an undergraduate student to tell the world of modern education that, "As men think, as men view the cosmos and

human nature, so they must act." The letter ends with a final pointing of the issue:

> "Isn't it palpably obvious to you that at the root of the trouble lies an apparent contradiction between the implications of our studies and the ideals we are expected to revere? Of course we are apathetic, discontented, reluctant to assume the responsibility of thinking and acting. Of course we live solely in the present, without visions of the future, without any firm convictions, hiding under a mask of conventional behavior the 'futilitarianism' the more thoughtful of us clearly recognize, the less thoughtful profoundly sense. Of course our feet are a thousand miles off the ground. We, the young, are the American Tragedy. . . .

IMPOTENT MATERIALISM

> "If we are to be saved, our elders must assist us to harmonize our education with the old faith. Perhaps you will say that every individual should grapple courageously with the facts by himself, that no one can do our thinking for us. Quite so. Yet surely with all the richness of your experience, with all your achievements, you and others like you can at least comment helpfully on the demoralizing naturalism and relativism that render us impotent to face the present world crisis. It would seem that America has grave need for a brand-new humanitarian philosophy based upon modern developments in the arts and sciences. Callow youth cannot conjure up such a philosophy without guidance.
>
> "If our outlook is ever to rise above a selfish materialism, somehow, somewhere, *we must find an answer to our questions.*"

THE AGE OF INQUIRY

Where shall American youth find this "brand-new humanitarian philosophy"? What are the "modern developments in the arts and sciences" upon which it might be based? One wonders if the author of this letter has not some positive formulation to suggest. It is to be hoped that modern youth's "challenge" to education will open up a series of discussions in the leading periodicals of the country, so that the causes of modern materialism may be more thoroughly examined and the various antidotes which are proposed be subjected to careful scrutiny. A development of this sort would help to reveal the incapacity of either religion or science to meet and deal with the problems of the modern world. It would foster independent thinking and lessen the influence of established authority, whether of church or school. There is no reason to think that a cycle of impartial inquiry may not grow rather suddenly from this manifesto of youth to education, and the self-reliant attitude that would result is the first

step toward the Theosophical philosophy. Meanwhile, theosophists must work on from their side, making the teaching easy of access for all whose minds are being opened by these honest questionings.

> Believing in his teacher, the theosophist sees all around him the evidence that the race mind is changing by enlargement, that the old days of dogmatism are gone and the "age of inquiry" has come, that the inquiries will grow louder year by year and the answers be required to satisfy the mind as it grows more and more, until, at last, all dogmatism being ended, the race will be ready to face all problems, each man for himself, all working for the good of the whole, and that the end will be the perfecting of those who struggle to overcome the brute. For these reasons the old doctrines are given out again, and Theosophy asks every one to reflect whether to give way to the animal below or look up to and be governed by the God within. (*The Ocean of Theosophy,* pp. 50-51.)

Psychism—Popular and "Scientific"

The spread of interest in psychic phenomena shows itself in the almost simultaneous appearance of articles on this subject in periodicals appealing to widely differing tastes and classes of mind. *Liberty,* for example, on April 19, began serial publication of portions of Stewart Edward White's latest book, *The Unobstructed Universe,* which ran through five issues. Catering to another type of audience, the *Scientific American* announced in its April number a program of psychic research to be conducted by an editorial committee in cooperation with the Universal Council for Psychic Research. Three articles describing séances held by the committee with the medium, Rose Ann Ericson, have already appeared. The June article concludes with the statement that Madame Ericson "had produced no psychic phenomena that have not been satisfactorily duplicated or explained through natural or scientific means." It is of interest, however, that the introductory editorial announcement, which offered prize money of $15,000 to any medium who could convince the committee of the reality of psychic phenomena, contained the following sentence: "Since experiments by Dunninger [Chairman of the Universal Council] and others have proved telepathy to an acceptable degree, demonstrations of this nature are not eligible for the award."

Dreams of the Future

Coronet continues to publish brief accounts of the scientifically inexplicable. The September and October numbers of last year provide several instances of prophetic dreams under the department heading, "Your Other Life." One is the experience of Arthur Train, novelist

of "Mr. Tutt" fame, who dreamed that a pigeon with the face of a woman settled on his wrist and said, "My name is Wilhelmina." The next evening Mr. and Mrs. Train attended a performance by Houdini. In the course of the entertainment Houdini snapped his fingers and several pigeons flew from the wings. One alighted on Houdini's wrist, and the magician remarked to the audience, "Her name is Wilhelmina." Mr. Train had never before seen Houdini perform.

Some Warning Dreams

Among dream premonitions of danger or death, described in *Coronet,* are the following: John Williams, an Englishman living at Cornwall, took little interest in politics. However, on May 3, 1812, he dreamed he witnessed the shooting of Spencer Perceval, then Prime Minister of England, in the cloak room of the House of Commons. Three times that night he dreamed the same dream. Friends laughed at his desire to go to London to warn the statesman. He stayed in Cornwall, but recorded the dream in affidavit form. On May 11, Perceval was assassinated in the lobby of the House of Commons, shot in the breast, as Williams' dream had anticipated. Less tragic, but equally significant, was the dream of Mrs. Joseph Conrad, in which she saw her husband thrown from a hansom cab which had skidded on a wet road. Next morning, when a servant began to tell her of the accident, she interrupted, saying, "Yes, I know." The familiar warning dream of a dangerous voyage came to a Mr. C. Sawyer. He was to have sailed out of Durban for Capetown on the *Waratah,* in mid July of 1909, but refused to go abroad because he had dreamed three times "of a man who held a long sword between him and the ship, while in the other hand he clutched a rag which was covered with blood." The *Waratah* was last seen on July 27. No trace of the ship has ever been found. It is presumed that she was lost in a bad gale on the following day. Sawyer knew nothing of this storm, but on July 28 he dreamed he saw the *Waratah* struggling in a high sea. A great wave rolled her over and she disappeared from sight. Sawyer's dream is all that is known of the fate of the *Waratah.*

A Leading Novelist's Testimony

The Saturday Review of Literature for Jan. 19 reflects the trend of literary interest in psychic powers with an article, "Fantasy and Literature," by the novelist, Phil Stong. He starts out by giving two experiences known to him personally. He tells of an Iowan

Negro boy who one morning refused to go to work because of his dream of a hearse which went down to the mill where he was employed. That day the mill boilers burst and a hearse went by the boy's house "on its way to the mill to gather what was left of a number of victims." The other experience happened to Mr. Stong himself. At what he thought Mrs. Stong's rather foolish insistence, he did an errand for her on the way home from his New York office, which caused him to avoid a serious subway accident. As he tells it:

> I was probably crossing Forty-third Street when the subway train which I would otherwise have taken scattered pieces of passengers all over the I. R. T. tracks. When I got home, after a long, hot walk, my wife was sleeping. I woke her gently; she had been crying in her sleep.
>
> "I know," she said. "Where was the wreck?"
>
> She had been napping almost from the minute the wreck occurred; there were no extras out and no way she could have known about the accident. Her subconscious might have caught something from the shrieking ambulances into St. Vincent's, even in her sleep, but her subconscious would have had to be an unusually clever one to tell her about that disaster—there were about twenty people killed as I remember—a half hour before the wreck when she urged a completely unreasonable errand in a completely unusual and Xantippic manner to keep me off that train.

A Sensible Commentary

Before going on to his subject of "Fantasy in Literature," Mr. Stong philosophizes a bit. Sceptical of "intervention from the Other World," he thinks that "in the New Science we have a suggestion of how 'premonitions' might occur by some rare extension of our numerous undefined but ordinary psychic potentialities." Dunne's multidimensional conception of time he finds pretty confusing, as do most ordinary mortals, and it is pleasant to read Mr. Stong's common sense discussion of the problem:

> Such matters are still in the legitimate field of sober philosophy or research. It is not impossible that preperception may sometime be metaphysically rationalized; it is a cheap and ancient figure, but "psychic" impacts independent of our ordinary senses are not nearly as strange to us as wireless telegraphy would have been to anyone living much before the time of Volta and the differentiation of dynamic and static electricities. The notion that such "psychic" impacts are electrical is well enough; perhaps they are some other effect as strange to us as Hertzian waves or cathode rays would have been to our great-grandfathers; strange to us as they may not be to our grandsons.

LEVELS OF INTEREST IN THE PSYCHIC

From these several treatments of spiritualism and psychic phenomena, it should be clear that the so-called "supernormal" is destined soon to become a subject of universal attention, although the quality of its attractions will differ according to the various intellectual and moral levels in the race mind. The mass magazines are sure to exploit the "lure" of the hidden and unknown, with which, in the case of spiritualism, will be joined the pathetic hope of the bereaved for proof of an after-life. This trend is illustrated by *Liberty's* reprinting of chapters from Stewart Edward White's *Unobstructed Universe,* which is frank spiritualism, however adorned with a pseudo-philosophical jargon and phrased with the cunning art of an experienced writer. It is unfortunate that Mr. White's prestige as an author of eminence through many years should have been allowed to give weight to the spiritualistic interpretation of psychic phenomena. In this book he reveals a lifetime spent in spiritualistic research with his wife, now dead, who was a medium, and tells at length of many séances, held with an anonymous psychic, through whom he and a few friends obtained "metaphysical" instruction from the "spirit" of Mrs. White. To the uncritical who are ignorant of the Theosophical explanation of the after-death states, and of mediumistic phenomena, Mr. White's book will make plausible reading. *The Unobstructed Universe* is intensely personal, almost deliberate in its striving for sophisticated effects, and will doubtless impress many unsuspecting readers.

THE "SCIENTIFIC" APPROACH

While the *Scientific American* investigation has so far resulted only in a continuance of the usual scientific attitude, "Case not proved," experiments will continue and conclusions of the Committee will be regularly reported. At present the effort is concerned only with "psychic phenomena of a physical nature," or the possible production of "ectoplasm," as psychic researchers have named astral matter in its visible state. The outcome of such experiments is of no particular importance with regard to the *reality* of materialization, for the conditions under which the medium is forced to work are often prejudicial to success. Theosophists, moreover, may well be grateful for scientific failure to obtain any conclusive evidence of this aspect of mediumship, as delaying as long as possible the more dangerous developments of the cycle of psychism. But whatever the members of the *Scientific American* Committee discover about spiritualism—whether, as they think, the "facts" are for or against the

existence of psychic phenomena—repeated publication of the accounts of such experiments will inevitably stir up morbid interest in the subject and encourage "amateur" dabbling in spiritualism.

Some Brighter Signs

Not *all* the current signs of the rising tide of psychism are depressing in character. Now that some psychic phenomena are accepted as facts, important questions are being asked by thoughtful persons. And Mr. Stong's hope that "preperception" may sometime be "metaphysically rationalized" evidences recognition that a background of principles is necessary for the interpretation of psychic phenomena. Many years ago William James suggested a philosophical view to which he was led from a study of spiritualistic and similar phenomena, which may very well be adopted today in consequence of the general admission of telepathic experience and prevision. In the *American Magazine* for October, 1909, Dr. James offered the following explanation:

> . . . there is a continuum of cosmic consciousness, against which our individuality builds but accidental fences, and into which our several minds plunge as into a mother-sea or reservoir. Our "normal" consciousness is circumscribed for adaptation to our external earthly environment, but the fence is weak in spots, and fitful influences from beyond leak in, showing the otherwise unverifiable common connection. Not only psychic research, but metaphysical philosophy, and speculative biology are led in their own ways to look with favor on some such "panpsychic" view of the universe as this. Assuming this common reservoir of consciousness to exist, this bank upon which we all draw, and in which so many of the earth's memories must in some may be stored, or mediums would not get at them as they do, the question is, What is its own structure? What is its inner topography? . . . What are the conditions of individuation or insulation in this mother-sea? To what tracts, to what active systems functioning separately in it, do personalities correspond?

A "Memory-Continuum"?

In an intuitive moment, Dr. James wrote a passage suggesting many of the functions of the astral light, and asked the questions which only Theosophy can answer. Nor are more recent writers without similar inspiration. In 1936 the Duke University Press published a volume by Dr. Helge Lundholm, *The Psychology of Belief,* in which much the same philosophical ideas are presented. A reviewer in *Philosophy of Science* for July, 1937, summarizes Lundholm's theory of

the memory-continuum, a "metaphysical" concept covering all the mind-units ranging from the hypothetical cell-mind at the bottom to the hypothetical deity at the top. Since, as Dr. Lundholm believes, psychical research indicates that memories survive bodily death, and since evolution is purposive (as indicated by the role of instinct or racial memories in evolution), the author concludes that the individual memory-continuum is a part of a wider field, eventually an infinite memory-continuum akin to the transmittant mind of William James or the super-human monads of Leibniz.

A Modern Philosopher Speaks

What is probably the most penetrating and valuable of all recent discussions of psychic phenomena appeared in the British journal, *Philosophy,* for October, 1940. Prof. H. H. Price, who was elected president of the Society for Psychical Research in 1939, and who teaches Logic at Oxford University, writing on "Questions about Telepathy and Clairvoyance," frankly considers the idea of a World-Soul made up of a collectivity of Leibnizian monads. Rarely is there printed so broadly intelligent an analysis of the philosophical implications of psychic phenomena. Prof. Rice speaks of the gradual change in opinion during the past thirty years, observing:

> Most educated people are now . . . prepared to admit the reality of Telepathy and Clairvoyance, and even to give a fair hearing to the case for Precognition. Here I think the educated public is quite right. The evidence for Telepathy and Clairvoyance is both abundant and good; and the evidence for Precognition—the most paradoxical, perhaps, of all supernormal phenomena—is very considerable.

Powers In Man

Prof. Price remarks that although the educated public shows an intelligent regard for the facts of psychic phenomena, the professional *philosophers* lag behind, not so much rejecting as ignoring the facts! He continues:

> Now this attitude seems to me indefensible. If Telepathy and Clairvoyance do occur—and I see no way of denying it—then surely they *must* be extremely important. For it will follow that the human mind has powers entirely different from sense-perception, introspection, memory, and inference. If Precognition occurs, we shall probably have to revise our theories of Time and Causation in the most drastic manner. Even Haunting raises some pretty problems for the student of Perception. I am afraid that is some truth in the taunt of Professor von Mises. Philosophers, he says, are always on the side of the big battalions; they erect the scientific conclusions of the last generation into *a priori* truths.

A Return to Leibniz

Having told the modern philosophical fraternity these unpleasant facts, Prof. Price examines at length the various forms of telepathic and clairvoyant perception, finally arriving at three alternative hypotheses which may possibly explain the phenomena, involving (1) the conception of a World-soul in which all beings participate in varying degree; (2) the theory of Leibniz that every mind is a monad which reflects every other from its own proper point of view (this theory, he suggests, would require an explanation of why there *seems* to be so little clairvoyance), and (3) a rather complex explanation founded on the idea of "multiple perspectives" suggested by Bertrand Russell in *Our Knowledge of the External World.* Prof. Price seems to incline to the Leibnizian doctrine as most adequately meeting the facts. He concludes with the clarifying observation that modern writers find it difficult to discuss psychic phenomena because "we have at present no language for describing them intelligently." "Our linguistic conventions," he points out, echoing H. P. Blavatsky, "were mainly designed for talking about the physical world." This article by Prof. Price should be read in full by all students to whom the file of *Philosophy* may be accessible.

Statistics of Church Membership

According to 1936 figures of the U. S. Census of Religious Bodies, published last August, there are 256 sects in America with a total of 55,807,366 members. While this total represents a 2 per cent gain during ten years, the total population has increased by 10 per cent since 1926, indicating a relative set-back for religion. (*Newsweek,* Nov. 18, 1940.) Comparing these figures with private surveys, Benson Y. Landis, researcher for the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ, concluded that many pastors failed to report their membership and that actually, there are 68,600,000 church members in the United States. This total would represent a 25 per cent gain over the 1926 figure of the religious census, indicating that interest in religion is growing twice as fast as the population.

The "Secular" Trend

Assuming the Landis analysis is correct, what does it signify? Superficial observers are loudly claiming a religious rebirth for America, citing these church-member totals as proof. But thoughtful Christians look at them differently. Charles Clayton Morrison, editor of the *Christian Century,* observes:

> You have read each year of the growth of membership of nearly all the churches, and you have taken it for granted that the statistical growth of the churches indicates that religion is flourishing, and therefore that the spirit of secularism must be on the retreat. But this is not true. It is quite possible for the churches to be growing in membership, and at the same time to be growing weaker in spiritual vigor. It is quite possible that while the churches are getting stronger in numbers, the spirit of secularism is getting a stronger grip upon both the churches and the community. The power of religion in a society cannot be measured in terms of the increase in a church's membership; it can be measured only in relation to the corresponding increase or decrease of secularism. (*Christian Century,* May 7.)

Dr. Morrison regards as peculiarly ominous the growing secular spirit of the churches themselves. "It is invading the church and thereby weakening the spiritual power of the church, despite the annual increment of the churches' membership." The meaning of the church to its own members, he feels, "is becoming increasingly superficial and casual," suggesting that this may account for statistical gains in membership. "Perhaps the churches are gaining in membership just because they have given hostages to secularism and therefore attract people by something less than a genuine religious motivation."

FACING REALITY

Dr. Morrison wants Americans to "face reality" in the matter of religious education. The way to deal with the problem, he thinks, is to return instruction in religion to the public schools. Aside from the constitutional difficulties of this proposal, Dr. Morrison might be asked to consider the fact that modern Christians cannot agree on what they really believe, and find it difficult to understand each other's views. His own recently published book, *What Is Christianity?* elicited an avalanche of questions from readers of the *Christian Century,* many of whom simply did not know what he was talking about. Dr. Morrison tried to deal with their questions in a series of articles in the *Century,* but his discussions did little to lessen the confusion. The real answer to these problems, which leading Christians are not likely to accept, is that Protestant Christianity is undergoing the long and painful process of disintegration. It has no meaning for the modern world.